



U.S. Department of Justice

United

*States Attorney
Southern District of Iowa*

U.S. Courthouse Annex, Suite 286 515 / 284-6283
110 East Court Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2053 FAX 515 / 284-6288

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 7, 2004

CONTACT: Al Overbaugh
Law Enforcement Coord.

U.S. Attorney and DEA Present Asset Forfeiture Check to the Iowa Department of Public Safety

Des Moines - On July 7, 2004, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Iowa Matthew G. Whitaker and representatives of the Drug Enforcement Administration presented checks to Colonel Robert Garrison of the Iowa State Patrol. A check in the amount of \$447,622, represents the Iowa Department of Public Safety's share of the forfeiture of \$746,198 in cash seized during a traffic stop in Pottawattamie County on January 16, 2002.

On January 16, 2002, Lawrence Armstrong, age 57, Detroit, Michigan, was stopped for speeding on Interstate-80 in Pottawattamie County by the Iowa State Patrol. The Iowa State Trooper while conducting the traffic stop became suspicious of the activities of Mr. Armstrong and his female companion and requested assistance of the Nebraska State Patrol Canine Unit. After responding, the NSP drug detector dog alerted to several suitcases in the rental car driven by Armstrong. The suitcases were then opened and were found to contain \$746,198 in cash.

The seizure was referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office through the Omaha office of the Drug Enforcement Administration after Mr. Armstrong contested the administrative forfeiture of the money. The U.S. Attorney's Office filed a civil forfeiture lawsuit against the money alleging that the money was forfeitable as either drug money or as property involved in an illegal money transmitting business and subsequently prevailed in the lawsuit by way of a summary judgement. Mr. Armstrong had contended that the money was given him by his deceased father, who had found the money in vacant building. The Court found that Mr. Armstrong did not have any legal standing to claim the seized money.